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NEWS

Getting answers about BPD checkpoints

BUFFALO, N.Y. -- We are looking into an issue that's getting a lot of attention on social media -- Buffalo Police traffic checkpoints. There are Facebook groups dedicated to alerting drivers about where they are.



Author: Kelly Dudzik

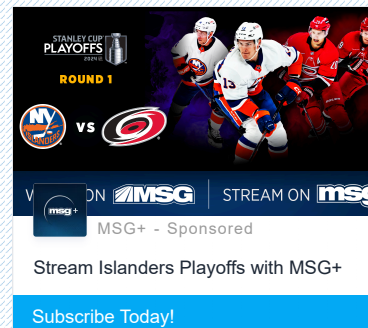
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BUFFALO, N.Y. -- We are looking into an issue that's getting a lot of attention on social media -- Buffalo Police traffic checkpoints. There are Facebook groups dedicated to alerting drivers about where they are.

And now, as the Democratic primary in the mayoral race approaches, it's become an election issue. This is a big topic of debate, especially now that people can post about checkpoints, and their experiences with them, online.



Tuesday, we spoke with a Buffalo woman who is upset after her daughter was stopped at a checkpoint, and we got some answers from police.

Katrinna Martin-Bordeaux says her daughter was stopped at a Buffalo Police traffic checkpoint Monday just after 5 p.m. on Leslie Street on Buffalo's East Side. Martin-Bordeaux rushed to the checkpoint and went live on Facebook. Her video has been shared by almost two-hundred people and has more than 10-thousand views.

"This is something that is constantly happening in our community, in our neighborhood, and it's not an isolated incident, this isn't our first rodeo, and this isn't her first time ever being stopped. I've just had it at this point," says Martin-Bordeaux.

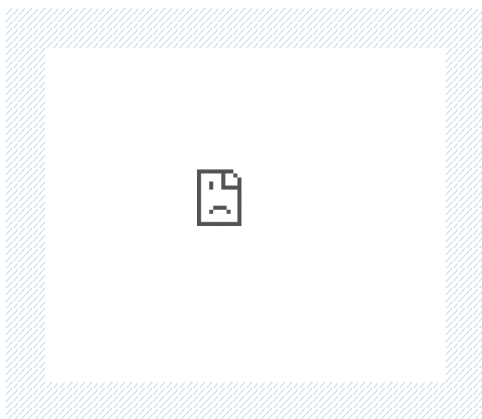
Martin-Bordeaux says her daughter was pulled over for an alleged seat belt infraction, but was wearing her seat belt and ultimately did not receive a ticket.

Tuesday night, Martin-Bordeaux led a meeting of the Young Black Democrats of Western New York to rally voters and "change the culture of the Buffalo Police Department." We were not permitted to shoot video of the meeting, but we spoke with Martin-Bordeaux before it began.

"Do you think if police are saying, well, we're doing this because we think it will help make our community safer, will get bad people off the roads, and this is a safety issue, what would you say to that?" asked 2 On your Side's Kelly Dudzik.

"What I would say to that is that we need to move to do a FOIA request, I would like to see a FOIA request to see how many of these police checkpoints are set up in high impact communities, opposed to other communities, so we can actually see the statistical breakdown of felonious crimes that they're catching people doing with these checkpoints," said Martin-Bordeaux.

And that is information we do not have.



Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown was not made available for an interview Tuesday, but we spoke with Buffalo Police Lt. Jeff Rinaldo on the phone who told us the checkpoints are done in an effort to make the roads safer by making sure drivers have a license, registration, and insurance. Rinaldo told us many factors contribute to the location of checkpoints -- including calls from concerned citizens and data about where traffic accidents happen and where speeding is a problem.

He also said the locations are chosen based on where it's safe for police to pull people over.

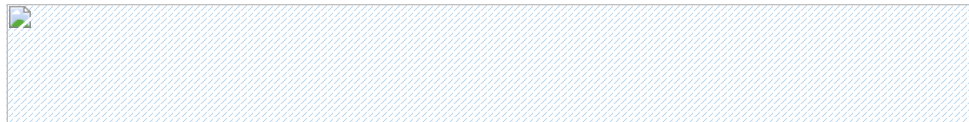
We requested specific information from police and they gave us the locations for July 1 - 7. The checkpoints were held across the city, spread out across different neighborhoods, three each day, except for July 4 when there weren't any.

This is only a snapshot of information.

Lt. Rinaldo told us the number this year is probably similar to last year, but we don't have exact numbers. And we don't know whether the number of locations has increased or decreased. We also don't know how many people were stopped, what they were stopped for, or whether they were cited or arrested.

The Buffalo Police Department requested that we do not make these locations public because they are concerned about the safety of the officers, and we are respecting that.

We will stay on this story and ask the Mayor about it the next time we see him.



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